THE Nature and Manner OF Man's Bleſſing GOD;

With Our

OBLIGATIONS thereto.

A SERMON

Preached at Salem, upon a *Publick Thankſgiving*, the *Thurſday* after the Death of the

Reverend,

Mr. *GEORGE CURWIN*,

Who departed this Life, *Novemb.* 23d. 1717. In the 35*th* Year of his Age.

By JOHN BARNARD, A.M.

Colleague Paſtor to the Firſt Church of CHRIST in *Marblehead*.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

To the Honourable

Col. *Samuel Brown*, Eſq;

One of His Majeſty's Council for the Province of the Maſſachuſetts-Bay, in New-England.

SIR'

YOUR *peculiar influence in Introducing the Reverend Mr.* George Curwin *into the Work of the Miniſtry in* Salem, (*happy in being the Seat of his Birth and Labours,*) *ſeems to have been under the ſpecial Direction of Heaven; and ſpeaks Your near view of the Importance of that Sacred Truſt, and Your true Concern to tranſmitt Religion, in it's Greateſt Purity, to the Riſing Generation: as Your Affliction for his Loſs does, Your high Eſteem of His Perſonal Merit, and Your juſt Senſe of the awful Frown of Divine Providence, in ſo ſpeedy a Removal of Him from amongſt you.*

AND *ſince Your true Value for ſo Great and Good a Man, has lead You to demand this faint Sketch, which the Publick Thanksgiving,*

my

my ſhort Notice, and my own Sorrows, would allow me to give of Him; that You might leave the Memory of His Worth, and Your own Veneration for Him, to admiring Poſterity; Duty obliges me thus to ſubmit it to the Direction of His Patron.

WHICH I do, with my earneſt Prayers, That the Great Shepherd of the Sheep, would afford His moſt tender Compaſſions to the Bereaved Flock, You belong to; lead it in a right way; and beſtow an Accompliſhed Gift of Heaven upon it, that may indeed Succeed Him in His Vertues, and enjoy a double Portion of the ſame Good Spirit which reſted upon Him: make You particularly Inſtrumental, equal to Your Advantages, in promoting the Peace, Holineſs, and Flouriſhing of the Church; enrich You, & Yours, with the Fulneſs of the Bleſſings of the Goſpel of Peace here, and with an Unperiſhable Inheritance in the World to Come.

Your

Honour's

Moſt Humble

and

Obedient Servant;

Marblehead,
Dec. 2. 1717.

John Barnard.

THE

THE *Nature* and *Manner* Of Man's Bleſſing GOD.

PSALM CIII. 1.

Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul; and all that is within me, Bleſs His Holy Name.

THE Great Intention of this Pſalm is, to Diſpoſe us for the noble Employments of the Heavenly World, where the Perfected Spirits, (among whom our Deceaſed Brother bears a joyful part,) are inceſſant and unwearied in their Eternal Acknowledgments, their Hallelujahs and Adorations to their Almighty Sovereign, the Immenſe Fountain of their Bleſſedneſs. Here therefore the Holy Pſalmiſt begins the Melody; and with an elevated Note raiſes his own Devotion, ſummoning all his Powers to engage herein; and excites the Reaſonable and Religious World to joyn in the Harmony, that there may be one conſtant and endleſs Symphony in the Celebration of the Praiſes of our God.

THIS

THIS is the Duty and Service which Men and Angels owe to their Exalted Sovereign, a Sacrifice truly grateful and pleasing to Him, the best exercise of their Powers, and the height of their Felicity.

THE Arguments which the Psalmist uses to enforce this Exhortation, as they abound with sufficient Consolation, to revive our drooping Spirits, and render us sedate and easy under the most weighty Afflictions, that break in upon us in a mutable World; so are they truly strong and powerful upon the Devout Ingenuous, to pay this reasonable Homage to their Supream Lord, and Gracious Benefactor.

HE argues from the Gracious Nature of God, and the stability of His Covenant and promised Mercy; he argues from the Consideration of the Divine Beneficence, to ourselves in particular, and to the Church of God in the World: he argues from the Divine Sov'reignty, Empire and Dominions over all Visible and Invisible Worlds; the active Spirits that minister round His Throne, who do His Commandment, hearkening to the voice of His Word; and all His other Works in all places of His Dominion, which silently speak His Praise.

AND thro' the whole how grave and weighty are his Accents? and yet how brisk and lively doe his Notes run? while his Song is adorned with so many beautiful Ideas of a GOD, as are enough to lay every Evil Spirit, and keep on the joyful

joyful Sound, triumphant over the noiſy Diſcords of our mournful paſſions.

ONE would be ready to think, that the Holy Pſalmiſt was reduced to our preſent neceſſity, when we conſider him in the midſt of a Song of Praiſe touching the heavier Airs; as tho', like us, he were under the ſenſible Conviction, (poſſibly by the Loſs of his *Abſalom*,) that a Man tho' never ſo well furniſhed and endowed, and never ſo dear to us, yet his days are as Graſs; as a flower of the Field, ſo he flouriſheth; the wind paſſeth over it and it is gone, and the place thereof ſhall know it no more. But what a ſweet Harmony does he compoſe to this? when he meditates, that tho' God thus chide, yet He will not keep His Anger for ever; He deals not with us after our Sins, nor rewards us according to our Iniquities; He knows our frame, and pittieth us as a Father pittieth his Children: ſo does he raiſe himſelf above the Melancholy, ſtretch his pinions and ſoar away to the Everlaſting Mercies, and the Righteouſneſs of God to Childrens Children.

SO far ſhould any preſent Afflictions he might labour of, be from interrupting his Acknowledgments to his God, or make him forgetful of His Benefits, that even theſe ſhall become a part of his Song, and he knows how to Bleſs the Lord under them. And ſo I return to my Text: Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me, Bleſs His Holy Name. Where we have,

1. A Duty Excited to; *Bleſs the Lord, Bleſs His Holy Name.* A high Duty, and always incumbent on us in our various Conditions and Circumſtances of Life; and to be performed in a more ſet and ſolemn manner in times of remarkable Proſperity or Adverſity; as will eaſily be ſeen when in its proper place we conſider the nature of this Duty.

2. THE manner of our performing this Duty is directed, viz. *with our Souls, and all that is within us.* So the Pſalmiſt calls upon himſelf, and repeats the Summons again and again, and ſo ſhould we: and we need to Chaſtize ourſelves for our ſloth and negligence, in not returning to the Lord anſwerable to the Benefits received from Him, and our want of a ſuitable Deportment when under His Afflicting Hand.

3. THE Reaſons by which the Duty is enforced: 'Tis our *Lord* whom we are to Bleſs; and *His Name*, which is Great and worthy to be Praiſed; is Holy, and to be Reverenced and Adored with Sincerity and Humility of Soul. His Name; that is God conſidered in Himſelf, and the tranſcendent Excellencies of His Nature. His Name; God conſidered as manifeſting Himſelf to us in His Works of Mercy or of Judgment. So are we to Sing of Mercy and of Judgment. Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul, and all that is within me, Bleſs His Holy Name.

IN the further Proſecution of theſe Words I ſhall by Divine Aſſiſtance, endeavour theſe Three things; viz. 1. TO

I. TO ſhew what is meant by Bleſſing the Name of the Lord, which will open to us the nature of this Duty, and let us ſee what 'tis to Bleſs God.

II. I ſhall mention ſome Reaſon why we ſhould Bleſs the Lord; which will ſhew us our Obligation to the Duty.

III. I ſhall ſet before you after what manner this Duty is to be performed by us.

According to this method I am,

I. To ſhew what is *meant* by Bleſſing the Name of the Lord, or when we may be ſaid to Bleſs God. The phraſe to Bleſs God muſt always be underſtood with certain Limitations and Reſtrictions; as will be ſeen by taking a view of the various Acceptations of it, as it reſpects the ſeveral Relations of them that Bleſs and thoſe that are Bleſſed.

1. 'TIS uſed from Superiours to their Inferiours; which indeed is the moſt proper uſe of the phraſe to Bleſs: and it means the Superiours conferring upon the Inferiour ſuch Good things as he abſolutely needs for his well being, and which he can in no other way come at the poſſeſſion of. And ſo 'tis moſt truly applicable to God, who only can properly and in a ſtrict ſenſe be ſaid to Bleſs; who Bleſſes His People by conferring upon them ſuch Temporal and Spiritual Bleſſings which none but He can be-

ſtow. Thus when God tells Moſes how Aaron in His Name ſhould Bleſs the People, we find it to mean the Beſtowment of the Divine Favour upon them. Numb. VI. 24, 25, 26. *The Lord Bleſs thee, and keep thee, the Lord make His Face ſhine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His Countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.* And hence God Himſelf ſays to *Abraham*, Gen. XXII. 17. *In Bleſſing I will Bleſs thee*: which is Explained by declaring what great things He would do for him and his Seed after him. And this made *Jacob* ſo earneſt in his wreſtling with the Angel of the Covenant, and ſo reſolutely cry out, *I will not let thee go, except thou Bleſs me*, Gen. XXXII. 26.

2. SOMETIMES the phraſe is uſed between Equals, who are ſaid to Bleſs one an other; as a Man his fellow Creature: and then it means either their mutual acts of love and friendſhip, which the Laws of Juſtice and Charity oblige them to. As when 'tis ſaid, Matth. V. 44. *Bleſs them that Curſe you*: that is, let no ill carriage of theirs who curſe and perſecute you, hinder you from doing all the good offices of love and kindneſs to them which your Profeſſion obliges you to, and you mutually owe to one another. Or elſe it means our wiſhing well to one another, and ſincerely praying to God to Bleſs our Fellow-Creature. Hence we read, Pſal. CXXIX. 8. *The Bleſſing of the Lord be upon you, we Bleſs you in the Name of the Lord.* So *Jacob* called for the Children of his Son *Joſeph* that he might *Bleſs them*; Gen. XLVIII. 9. which he does in the form

form of a Solemn Prayer, ſaying, *God before whom my Fathers, Abraham and Iſaac did walk; the God that fed me all my life long unto this day; the Angel which redeemed me from all Evil, Bleſs the Lads*, verſe 15, 16.

3. THE phraſe to Bleſs is uſed from Inferiours to Superiours; and ſo I am lead into the ſenſe and meaning of it in my Text, viz. as Man's Bleſſing God.

NOW 'tis plain that in the two firſt ſenſes we cannot be ſaid to Bleſs God. For, if thou be Righteous, what giveſt thou Him, what receiveth He of thine Hand, (*a*). If He were hungry He would not tell thee; for the World is His, with the fulneſs thereof (*b*). The Infinite God has all Everlaſtingly in Himſelf, that is Eſſential to His own Glory and Happineſs; and no additions can be made thereto by all that Men or Angels are capable of.

NOR can we pretend to render to the Lord any proper mutual acts of Kindneſs. We are Beholden to God for all that we have and are; in Him we live, move, and have our being, (*c*). and from Him, the Father of Lights, comes down every good and perfect Gift we enjoy (*d*). But God is not, nor can He be Beholden to us for any thing. We are ever Dependent and conſtantly in need of Him; But God is utterly independent upon any thing out of Himſelf, and needeth us not.

(*a*) *Job* XXXV. 7. (*b*) *Pſal.* L. 12. (*c*) *Act.* XVII. 28. (*d*) *Jam.* I. 17.

NOR

NOR can we ſo much as wiſh anv thing to the Eſſential Glory and Happineſs of God, which He has not already and will never be without. Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? Canſt thou find out the Almighty to Perfection (*e*)? And ſince our moſt ſtretched Conceptions are not able to reach the Infinite fulneſs there is in God, how can we entertain a thought of any further degrees of Perfection as neceſſary to compleat the Glory of his Nature and the Felicity of His State. So that in theſe reſpects God is exalted above all Bleſſing and Praiſe (*f*). Yea He Inhabiteth the Praiſes of His Iſrael (*g*): and His Saints Bleſs Him (*h*).

THEY do ſo, either by Acknowledging the Perfections of the Divine Nature, and ſpeaking of His Greatneſs and the Glory of His Majeſty; which is to Laud and Praiſe His Name: Or, they do ſo by a grateful ſenſe of the many Inſtances of His Bounty, and the multiplied Benefits He communicates to them, and ſuitable returns therefor; which is Thanksgiving: Or they do ſo, when under the Afflicting Hand of God with Deep Humility and an entire Reſignation of Soul they maintain an awful ſenſe of the Divine Supremacy, unbiaſed Rectitude and unerring Wiſdom; which is proper Adoration. In each of theſe ſenſes Man may be ſaid to Bleſs God.

Thus,

1. WE Bleſs the Name of the Lord when we think highly of Him, and ſpeak His Praiſe. So

(*e*) *Job* XI. 7. (*f*) *Neh.* IX. 5. (*g*) *Pſal.* XXII. 3. (*h*) *Pſal.* CXLV. 10.

the

the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. 34. 1. *I will Bleſs the Lord at all times, His Praiſe ſhall continually be in my mouth.* And hence we find the Levites with ſome of the Fathers ſaying to the People, Neh. IX. 5. *Stand up, and Bleſs the Lord your God forever; and Bleſſed be thy Glorious Name*; and then they go on to celebrate His Praiſe in ſpeaking of His Excellencies and the Glorious effects of them. So David is ſaid to *Bleſs the Lord before all the Congregation*, 1 Chron. XXIX. 10. *Thine O Lord, is the Greatneſs, the Power, the Glory, the Victory, and the Majeſty*, &c.

2. WE Bleſs God by our Thanksgiving; a thankful acknowledgment of His Mercies, and ſuitable returns to Him therefor. Thus in this *Pſalm* CIII. 2. *Bleſs the Lord O my Soul, and forget not all His Benefits.* So the *Pſalm* CXLV. which is a Pſalm of Thanksgiving, uttering the memory of the Goodneſs of God in the Care and Kindneſs of Divine Providence unto all His Creatures, but eſpecially them that fear Him, begins ver. 1. *I will extol thee my God, O King, and I will Bleſs thy Name for ever and ever:* and it concludes in the ſame ſtrain; verſe 21. *My mouth ſhall ſpeak the Praiſe of the Lord, and let all fleſh Bleſs His Holy Name for ever & ever.*

3. THUS we Bleſs God by a ſuitable Deportment under Divine Chaſtiſements; when from a ſenſe of the Hand of God upon us, in all the Sorrows that befall us, we are patient and ſubmiſſive, ſilent and adoring, and our Corrections produce the deſired Effects in our Amendment.

Thus

Thus we find even a *Nebuchadnezzar*, under a ſenſe of the Holy Hand of God which had lain heavy upon him, ſaying, Dan. IV. 34. *I lift up mine eyes unto Heaven and my underſtanding returned to me, and I Bleſſed the moſt High, and I praiſed and honoured Him that liveth for ever*; and this he does by acknowledging the Dominion and Sovereignty of God, and himſelf as nothing before Him; *none can ſtay His Hand, or ſay unto Him, what doeſt thou? His works are Truth and His ways Judgment*; *and thoſe that walk in pride, He is able to abaſe*, ver. 35, 37. Well then may we expect to find a Holy *Job* in this Devout frame, when the heavy Tydings of his multiplied Loſſes roll in thick upon him, till they are all compleated in the fatal finiſhing ſtroke of the untimely Death of his Children: In the Diſtreſs hereof, he *aroſe and rent his mantle and ſhaved his head, and fell down upon the Ground and Worſhipped*; ſaying, *God hath given, and God hath taken away, Bleſſed be the Name of the Lord.* Job I. 20, 21. Agreeable to the Pſalmiſt, who under a ſenſe of the Divine Chidings, ſays, *Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul.* Thus we ſee what is meant by Bleſſing the Name of the Lord. I paſs to the Second thing propoſed, viz.

II. TO mention ſome *Reaſons*, why we ſhould Bleſs the Name of the Lord; which ſhews us our Obligation to this Duty. A High Duty 'tis, what God requires of us, and well becomes us as Reaſonable and Religious Creatures: what the Holy Name of God, the Benefits we receive from Him, and His Relation to us, challenges at our hands.

1. THE

1. THE *Holy Name of God*, which is God Himſelf and His Adorable Excellencies and Perfections demands the Tribute of Praiſe from us. The Name of God it is God Himſelf, cloathed with Light as with a Garment, and compaſſed with Glory as with a Veſture: 'Tis Infinite Majeſty and Greatneſs, Incomprehenſible Power and Wiſdom, unrivalled Goodneſs Mercy and Truth and Holineſs, poſſeſſing an Univerſal and Everlaſting Empire and Dominion. The Glorious Perfections of God are each of them God Himſelf; His Nature ſo made known unto us; and are therefore called His Name, becauſe God diſcovers Himſelf to us by them, and gives us ſome glimpſe of His Glory; which appears ſo bright to the contemplative mind, as to dazzle us with the Luſtre of them, and fill us with holy Admiration and Love. All of this Name of God demands the Tribute of Praiſe from us: for 'tis in itſelf truly Excellent and Glorious, a Beauty ſo heightened and conſpicuous, that the greateſt created Excellency is but a glimmering, mere Darkneſs compared with the unviewable Brightneſs of it. And becauſe the Name of God is ſo Excellent, it deſerves our higheſt eſteem and conſtant praiſes, which is the leaſt Homage we can give to a Being the Perfections of whoſe Nature exceed our moſt enlarged conceptions, nor can Angels approach the Seat of them without veiled Faces. So the Pſalmiſt calls upon all Creatures to Praiſe the Lord, *for His Name alone is Excellent, His Glory is above Earth and Heaven*, Pſal. CXLVIII. 13.

THUS we are to Praiſe God for His Infinite Majeſty and Greatneſs: For He is High above all Gods, and none among the Sons of the Mighty may be likened unto Him. *Come let us Sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noiſe unto the rock of our Salvation; for the Lord is a Great God, and a Great King above all Gods*, Pſal XCV. 1, 3. *O Sing to the Lord a new Song, Sing unto the Lord all the Earth, Sing unto the Lord, Bleſs His Name; Honour and Majeſty are before Him, Strength and Beauty are in His Sanctuary*, Pſal. XCVI. 1, 2, 6. *Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praiſed, His Greatneſs is unſearchable*, Pſal. CXLV. 3.

GOD is to be Praiſed for His uncontroulable and unlimitted Power and Might; which is equal to His Will, and does whatſoever pleaſeth Him in the Heavens, the Earth, the Sea, and all Deep places; by which He ſtretched out the Heavens like a Curtain, and laid the Beams of His Chambers upon the Waters, ſtretched out the North over the empty place, and hangeth the Earth upon nothing; before whom the Pillars of Heaven tremble, and the Earth melteth like wax at His preſence. *Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord Glory and Strength, give unto the Lord the Glory due unto His Name*, Pſal. XXIX. 1, 2. And becauſe *God exalteth Himſelf in His own Strength*, therefore ſhould we *Sing and Praiſe His Power*, Pſal. XXI. 13.

THE Infinite Wiſdom of God challenges our Praiſes. He is wiſe in Counſel as well as wondrous in Working; who by Wiſdom made the Heavens;

Heavens; His Works alſo are manifold, and in Wiſdom has He made them all, and with equal Counſel and Deſign orders all their Station and various mutations. *To the only Wiſe God be the Honour and Glory*, 1 Tim. I. 17. *Praiſe ye the Lord, for it is good to Sing Praiſes to our God;— for His Underſtanding is Infinite*, Pſal. CXLVII. 1, 5.

THUS God is to be Praiſed for His Eſſential Goodneſs and Mercy; who is Good, and does Good even to all, and His tender Mercies are over all His Works: the Goodneſs of whoſe Nature is the unfailing Fountain whence Men and Angels are ſupplied with all thoſe Streams that ſupport them in Life and compleat their felicity; whoſe Mercy is high above the Heavens, and is the ſure Baſis of their Comfort that put their Truſt in Him. *O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is Good, for His Mercy endureth for ever*, Pſal. CVII. 1. And ſo, Pſal. CVIII. *init.* *O God, my Heart is fixed, I will ſing and give Praiſe, even with my Glory; I will Praiſe thee, O God, among the People, and I will ſing Praiſes unto thee among the Nations; for thy Mercy is great above the Heavens.*

SO the Truth and Fidelity of God is to be Praiſed: His unchangeable Faithfulneſs to Himſelf, and to His Word and Promiſes. He is the Unchangeable Jehovah, without variation or ſhadow of turning; whoſe Word is made faſt in Heaven, His Faithfulneſs reacheth unto the Clouds; the Word that hath gone out of His mouth remaineth ſtedfaſt for ever; He is of one

Mind, and who can turn Him. So the *Pſalmiſt*, Pſal. C. 1, 5. *Make a joyful noiſe unto the Lord all ye Lands,— enter into His Courts with Praiſe,— and Bleſs His Name,— His Truth endureth to all Generations.* And, Pſal. CXVII. is a ſhort but full Celebration hereof; O *Praiſe the Lord, all ye Nations; Praiſe Him all ye People,— the Truth of the Lord endureth for ever; Praiſe ye the Lord.*

AND thus are we to Praiſe God for His unbiaſed Righteouſneſs and Juſtice; the Foundation of whoſe Throne is Righteouſneſs and Judgment; and He is Righteous in all His Works. Hence ſays the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. XLVIII. 10. *According to thy Name, O God, ſo is thy Praiſe unto the Ends of the Earth; thy Right Hand is full of Righteouſneſs.* And the CXLIX Pſalm, ſeems to have been compoſed on purpoſe to celebrate the Righteouſneſs of God, even in the Judgments which He executeth in the World.

FINALLY the unſpotted Holineſs of God demands our Praiſes. Bleſs His Holy Name; the Eſſential Purity of the Divine Nature, and the Holineſs of His Works. The Holineſs of God is as the Brightneſs of all His other Perfections, peculiarly the Glory of God; and ſhines Illuſtrious in His Word, and in all the Works of His Hands. For this the Holy Angels Praiſe Him, ſaying, *Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God Almighty*, Rev. IV. 8. And ſo muſt we at the call of the Devout Pſalmiſt, Pſal. XCIX. 5. *Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worſhip at His Footſtool, for He is Holy.* And ſo, Pſal. XCVII. 12. *Rejoyce in the Lord, ye Righteous,*

Righteous, and give thanks at the Remembrance of His Holineſs.

THUS do all the Glorious Perfections of God challenge our Praiſes; and when we conſider the Adorable Excellencies of the Divine Nature, harmonizing in the Amazing wonders of our Redemption by Jeſus Chriſt, as the Proſpect is ſtill more amiable and pleaſant, ſo our Praiſes ſhould be the more raiſed; intenſely devout, and unwearied. And then,

2. THE Many and Great *Benefits* we receive from God lay us under Obligation to a Dutiful Thanksgiving. Benefits from whomſoever communicated are an Obligation upon the Receiver to Thank the Donor; and one would think, that 'tis the leaſt we can do to be ſenſible of the Favours we receive, and Thank the Author of them. So 'tis accounted among Men. And the more and greater the Benefits conferred upon us by our gracious Sovereign are; and the more multiplyed and extenſive they are, the ſtronger are our Obligations to return our ſincere and hearty Thanksgiving. Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul, and *forget not all His Benefits.* To mention ſome of them, as they lie in a delightful variety, in this Pſalm.

(1.) THE *Forgiveneſs of Sin*; the juſtifying, and accepting of us to the Grace of Adoption, and Reconciliation thro' the Propitiatory Sacrifice of our Bleſſed Redeemer, is ſuch a matchleſs Benefit as we are for ever obliged to Bleſs the Holy

Holy Name of God for. Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul, who *Forgiveth thine Iniquities*, ver. 3. Tis God only that forgiveth Iniquity, and for the Accompliſhment of this Glorious work, hath drawn out the Bowels of His Mercy to us, and ſent His Eternal Son to become an Offering and a Sacrifice for Sin; in whom we have Redemption, thro' His Blood, even the Forgiveneſs of Sin, according to the riches of His Grace. This is deſervedly mention'd in the firſt place, as the Fountain from whence all other Mercies flow. What an unſpeakable Gift in this to a miſerable World? That the Eternal Father ſhould make a Sacrifice of His own Son; that thro' Him the chief of Sinners might have their Iniquities forgiven, be juſtifyed before Him, and accepted as His Children. For this are we obliged, and we can never enough Bleſs the Name of the Lord; This ſhould inſpire our Breaſts with Thankful Acknowledgments, and fill our Mouths with Songs of Praiſe. *O give Thanks unto the Lord, for His Mercy endureth for ever; ſo let the Redeemed of the Lord ſay.* Pſal. CVII. 1, 2. *O Lord, I will praiſe thee, tho' thou waſt angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comforteſt me*, Iſai. XII. 1. So ſang the Holy *Zacharias*, Luk. I. 68, 69. *Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael; for He hath viſited and Redeemed His People, and hath raiſed up an horn of Salvation for us, in the Houſe of His Servant David, &c.*

(2.) THE *Health* we enjoy is an Obligation upon us to return Thanks to God. Bleſs the Lord, *who Healeth thy Diſeaſes*, ver. 3. Thus whether

ther we conſider God as having actually Healed any of us of our Diſeaſes; or as the God who only can Heal, and who keeps us in Health. We are often, it may be the moſt of us, labouring under indiſpoſitions, pains and maladies, incident to our frame and brittle Conſtitution; and it may be we have ſometimes been brought very Low, even to the Edges of the Grave; but thro' the Goodneſs of God, we have had our Pains aſſwaged, our Maladies cured, our Diſeaſes Healed; and ſurely thoſe of us who have ſo experienced the Divine Goodneſs, will ſay, not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy Name alone O Lord be all the Glory. *He ſent His Word, and Healed them, O that Men would praiſe the Lord for His Goodneſs, and for His wonderful works to the Children of Men; and let them Sacrifice the Sacrifices of Thanksgiving, and declare His works with rejoycing*, Pſal. CVII. 20, 21, 22. The Living, the Living He ſhall Praiſe thee; as we deſire to do this Day, giving Thanks to God for that wonderful meaſure of Health He has favoured our Land with; and when Peſtilential Diſtempers have ſet footing upon our Shoars, God has ſpoken the Word, I will put none of theſe Diſeaſes upon thee, for I am the Lord that Healeth thee, and they have not been able to walk abroad in Darkneſs, nor waſt at noon Day. *I will* thankfully *ſay of the Lord He is our refuge, and our fortreſs, our God, in Him will we truſt; ſurely He hath delivered thee from the noiſome peſtilence, He hath covered thee with His feathers; ——only with thine Eyes ſhalt thou beheld it,— no Evil has befallen thee, neither has any Plague come nigh thy Dwelling*, vid. Pſal. XCI.

(3.) THAT

(3.) THAT God *Redeemeth our Life from Deſtruction* is a further Bond upon us to give Thanks unto Him and Bleſs His Name. See *ver.* 4. *He is our Life, and the Length of our Days*, Deut. XXX. 20. And how often has He graciouſly interpoſed to keep us in Life, and Lengthen out our Days, by giving His Angels charge over us to keep us in all our ways, to bear us up, as in their Arms, leaſt at any time we ſhould daſh our feet againſt a Stone. Innumerable are the Snares and Caſualties that ſurround us, the leaſt of which, armed with a permiſſion from God, would ſoon prey upon us. How often has the Divine Arm been put underneath us, and ſaved us from the deſtructive Accidents which elſe would have broke in upon us, unobſerved by us? And many a time, may we now ſay, had not the Lord been on our ſide we had been ſwallowed up by the Threatning Dangers, and the proud Waves had gone over us, and the Deep had incloſed us: The Lord is thy keeper, the Lord is thy ſhade upon thy right hand, the Lord hath preſerved thee from all Evil. It becomes us to ſay with the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. XXXIV. *ult. I will Bleſs the Lord at all times,* ——*O magnifie the Lord with me, I ſought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.* He hath done ſo particularly in His Guard upon our Sea Coaſt, and the wonders He hath wrought for us there, for which we give thanks to His Name this Day. When the Sons of Violence had invaded us, and the Cruel and Blood-thirſty lay hovering over us with a formidable power; God hath redeemed

not

not only our Subſtance, but our Lives from Deſtruction, by taking thoſe Pirates into His own Hands, He blew upon them in His Anger, and drove them with His fierce Tempeſt, till our Shoars proved their Deſtruction. They went down into the Waters like lead, ſaving a few that fell into our hands for an Example unto others. For this we take up our Song of Praiſe in the Pſal. CXXIV. 6, 7, 8. *Bleſſed be the Lord, who hath not given us a prey to their Teeth; our Soul is eſcaped as a Bird out of the Snare of the Fowler, the Snare is broken and we are eſcaped: our Help is in the Name of the Lord, who made Heaven and Earth.* And Pſal. LXVI. 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9. *Sing forth the honour of His Name, make His Praiſe Glorious; ſay unto God, how terrible art thou in thy works?— come and ſee the works of God; He is terrible in His doings towards the Children of men;— let not the Rebellious exalt themſelves; O Bleſs our God ye People, & make the voice of His Praiſe to be heard; which holdeth our Soul in Life, and ſuffereth not our feet to be moved.*

(4.) GOD's *crowning us with loving kindneſs and tender mercies* calls upon us to Bleſs His Holy Name, *ver.* 4. He encompaſſes His People with love and favour as with a Shield, and thro' the Mercy of the Moſt High their Proſperity ſits like a Crown upon their Heads. His Fatherly Love and Affection takes care of them, He gives them to ſee the Light of His Countenance, and to rejoyce in His Smiles. He hath furniſhed us with thoſe various Gifts and Qualifications which are in ſome good meaſure ſuitable to our Poſts and Employments. He gives and ſpares many

of our Delightful Friends with whom we ſolace ourſelves, and take counſel together. He orders our path for us, directs us in our way, and gives us to ſee a Comfortable iſſue of our Labours and rejoyce in the works of our Hands. *Bleſſed be the Lord my Strength*, thro' whom *the Sons of His People are as Plants grown up in their Youth, their Daughters as Corner Stones, poliſhed after the ſimilitude of a Palace: their Garners are full affording all manner of Store; their Sheep bring forth Thouſands, and ten thouſands in their Streets; their Oxen are ſtrong to Labour; and there is no breaking in nor going out, nor* cauſe of *complaining in their Streets*, Pſal. CXLIV. 1, 12, 13, 14.

OR if we meet with adverſe Circumſtances, has not the tender Mercy of God been exerciſed towards us? and His pity like that of a Father to His Children been manifeſted to us under them? He chaſtiſes us only when 'tis needful, and then in meaſure with His tendereſt Compaſſion ſtirred by the feeling of our Infirmities. He has puniſhed us leſs than our Iniquities deſerve; proportioned our tryals to our Strength; He has given forth Strength to encounter Afflictions, ſupported us under our Difficulties, has found out a way for our eſcape out of many of them, and we truſt will make them all turn to our Advantage. Thus does God crown us with loving kindneſs and tender mercy, and we do all of us more or leſs experience it; that even in our worſt Circumſtances we have yet ſo many Mercies as out weigh our Chaſtiſements: and *becauſe of His loving kindneſs, therefore our lip ſhould praiſe*

praiſe Him, Pſal. LXIII. 3. *Yea, we ſhould ſing in the ways of the Lord, for great is the Glory of the Lord; tho' the Lord be High yet He hath reſpect unto the lowly; tho' I walk in the midſt of trouble thou wilt revive me; — the Lord will perfect that which concerneth me, thy Mercy O Lord endureth for ever*, Pſal. CXXXVIII. 5. to the end.

(5.) THAT God *ſatisfieth our Mouth with Good things* obliges us to Thankfulneſs, *ver.* 5. All Eyes wait upon Him, and He giveth them their Meat in due ſeaſon; He fulfilleth the deſire of them that fear Him. From the inexhauſtible ſtores of His Goodneſs He communicates to us a full ſupply to all our wants; and daily loads us with His Benefits. He gives us our Food and Raiment, convenient for us, by which our frail Bodies are nouriſhed and refreſhed, and guarded againſt the inclemencies of the Air and injuries of the Weather. He deals forth unto us not ſparingly and with a ſlack hand, barely enough to keep Soul and Body together; but He allows us for our Conveniency Delight and Entertainment as well as for Neceſſity, giving us all things richly to enjoy: tho' not for the ſatisfying our carnal greedy Appetites, and for the pampering our unruly Luſts; yet for our comfortable ſupport in the Houſe of our Pilgrimage and to carry us well to our Journeys end; and ſuffers us not to lack any thing that would be Good for us. Our Thank-Offerings would be due, if God ſhould beſtow upon us no more than the crumbs that fall from His Table, but how much more when He has ſpread ſo large a Table for us and

ſo plentifully furniſhed it, filling our Mouths with good things and our Hearts with rejoycing. For this we are Aſſembled together to give thanks unto the Name of the Lord, who has this Year ſo abundantly ſatisfyed us with His Goodneſs; and the more affectionate ſhould our Acknowledgments be, the Smoke of our Burnt-Offering aſcend with the greater fervour, and our Peace-Offerings be the more Liberal, when we conſider that the Heavens have dropped down fatneſs to us in Anſwer, we truſt, to our Ardent Prayers therefor. When the early ſcorching Drought threatned utterly to lay waſte our pleaſant fruit, and burn up every green thing, we cryed unto the Lord our God, and our cry came up into His Holy dwelling place, and He granted us our Requeſt. Yea when our Pious Rulers had but determined to call upon this People to ſeek the Lord in our Diſtreſs, before we called the Lord anſwered us, and e'er the ſolemn Day approached He ſhowered down upon us His plentiful Rain, by which the latter Herbage was wonderfully recovered, and our Land has yielded a comfortable encreaſe.——*Praiſe waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion, unto Thee, ſhall the vow be performed, O thou that heareſt Prayer;* —— *thou viſiteſt the Earth, & watereſt it, thou greatly enricheſt it with the river of God, which is full of water, thou prepareſt them Corn when thou haſt ſo provided for it,* —*thou bleſſeſt the ſpringing thereof; thou crowneſt the Year with thy goodneſs, and thy paths drop fatneſs; they drop upon the paſtures of the wilderneſs, and the little hills rejoyce on every ſide; the paſtures are cloathed with flocks, the vallies alſo are covered over with*

with Corn, they ſhout for Joy, they alſo Sing, Pſal. LXV. 1, 2, 9, to the end.

(6.) AND if God *renews our Youth like the Eagle,* this calls for our Thanksgiving, *ver.* 5. This being an hard Text and difficult to be underſtood, I ſhall only ſay upon it, that if any, who thro' the Favour of God are ſpared to Old Age, under ſuch Circumſtances as calls for their Labour and Induſtry, yet have their ſtrength and vigour like that of Youth, and the Birds of prey, continued to them anſwerable to their work in a time when the infirmities of Age uſually ſeal up the hands from Labour. Or if under the weakneſs of the Body bowed down with Age, the intellectual Powers remain quick and lively as in the vigour of Youth: Or if we ſuppoſe the Words to refer to the Reſurrection ſtate, when our Bodies ſhall be raiſed, refined, and ſpiritualized: conſidering the Words in either of theſe ſenſes, in ſome or other of which Expoſitors generally underſtand them, certainly it calls upon us to Bleſs the Lord, who ſo maketh the *Man of an Hundred Years Old as a Child in Vigour,* (Iſai. LXV. 20.) or that we hope to partake of the Glorious Reſurrection of our Bodies, and the Bleſſed Conſequents of it.

(7.) *THE Lord executeth Righteouſneſs and Judgment for all that are Oppreſſed,* ver. 6. Which I take to include in it, thoſe Civil Liberties and Privileges, which render a People ſafe and eaſy. When God raiſeth them up Kings to be nurſing Fathers, and ſetteth to Rule over them Able Men, fearing

fearing God and hating Covetouſneſs. When He gives the King His Judgments, and His Righteouſneſs to the Kings Son, and the under Officers, and they Judge the People with Righteouſneſs, and the Poor with Judgment; the Mountains bring forth Peace and the little Hills by Righteouſneſs; Juſtice is diſpenſed like Showers, and flows down the Streets like a River, which refreſheth the Earth, and maketh the Righteous to flouriſh.

AND ſurely this calls for our Thanksgivings this Day, That God hath ſo over-ruled Affairs among the Nations, and the Spirits of the People, as maugre all the ſecret cabals againſt it, to bring to the Throne of Great Britain a Proteſtant Prince of the Illuſtrious Houſe of Hanover, under the Shadow of whoſe Wiſe and Juſt Adminiſtrations we may ſet our ſelves down in quiet, and joyfully eat of the fruit of our own Vine and Fig-Tree, without the diſtreſſing fears of the Uſurpations of a Popiſh and conſequently a Tyrannical Pretender; That God has appeared in the Mount of Difficulty, as a Man of War ſubduing the People under him, breaking the force of a powerful Invaſion, by diſpiriting their weak Chiefs and baffling the Counſels of their Wiſe, and turning the Rout back by the way by which they came, covering them with Shame and Contempt: that He has more lately interpoſed His watchful Eye, to ſpy out the hidden works of darkneſs, and bring to Light the dark deſign of intreaguing Stateſmen, and break to pieces the new formed Model for a Foreign Invaſion; and

that

that in the midſt of the Tumults of a ſtrangely uneaſy Faction at Home, and the envious Contrivance of Popiſh Enemies Abroad, God has graciouſly preſerved the Life of our Sovereign King GEORGE, and His Royal Offſpring, and now happily ſecured the Crown upon His Head, and redeemed the Nation to that eaſy Tranquility it enjoys at this Day: And that we have thoſe immediately over us, who ſeek our Welfare, and Feed us according to the Integrity of their Hearts, and Guide us according to the Skilfulneſs of their Hands; God alſo being with them to proſper them therein; and our Borders flouriſh with peace. *Let Iſrael rejoyce in Him that made them, and the Children of Zion be joyful in their King*, Pſal. CXLIX. 2. *I will ſing a new Song unto Thee, O God, upon a Pſaltery, and an Inſtrument of Ten Strings will I ſing Praiſes unto thee; it is He that giveth Salvation unto Kings, who delivereth David His Servant from the hurtful Sword*, Pſal. CXLIV. 9, 10. *Bleſſed be the Lord God, the God of Iſrael, who only doth wondrous things; and bleſſed be His Glorious Name for ever, and let the whole Earth be filled with His Glory. Amen and Amen*, Pſal. LXXII. 18, 19.

(8.) TO add no more, He hath made known His Ways unto Moſes His Acts unto the Children of Iſrael, *ver.* 7. Which I take to refer to the Revelation of the Divine Will and Commandment; that unto them were committed the lively Oracles of God; the Ark and Temple of the Lord was among them, and God had ſhewn them the Pattern of His Houſe, the outgoing and the incoming

incoming thereof, and had Conſecrated His Prieſts to wait upon them at His Altar; with them had ratifyed His Covenant, and given them the aſſured promiſe of the Meſſiah, the hope of Iſrael and the Saviour thereof.

AND has not God favoured us with His Goſpel, and viſited theſe Ends of the Earth, which once were regions of Darkneſs with a Great Light, and publiſhed in our Ears the Glad Tydings of great Joy, that to us there is born a Saviour? Has He not reared up His Tabernacle among us, and multiplied His Synagogues in our Land? Has He not prepared for us a River, by putting it into the Hearts of our Fathers to lay the Foundations of the School of the Prophets, the Streams whereof are many, run far and wide, and rejoyce the whole City of our God? This challenges our Thankful Acknowledgments, and for this we now lift up our hands on high, and Bleſs the Name of the Lord. *Great is the Lord and greatly to be praiſed in the City of our God, in the mountain of His holineſs: Beautiful for Scituation, the joy of the whole Earth is Mount Sion, in the ſides of the north, the City of the Great King: God is known in her palaces for a refuge; Let Mount Sion rejoyce, let the Daughters of Judah be glad,* Pſal. XLVIII. 1, 2, 3, 11. *I will ſing of the mercy of the Lord for ever,* for, *Bleſſed are the People that know the joyful Sound, that walk, O Lord, in the Light of thy Countenance,* Pſal. LXXXIX. 1, 15. *We will go into His Tabernacle, we will worſhip at His Footſtool;* ——*for the Lord hath choſen Zion, He hath deſired it for His Habitation; this is my Reſt for ever; here will I dwell for I have*

have deſired it ; —— *I will alſo cloath her Prieſts with Salvation, and her Saints ſhall ſhout aloud for Joy*, Pſal. CXXXII. 7, 13, 14, 16. *He ſhewed His Word unto Jacob, His Statutes and Judgments unto Iſrael* ; *He hath not dealt ſo with* every *Nation, and as for His Judgments they have not known them* : *Praiſe ye the Lord*, Pſal. CXLVII. 19, 20.

AND if God hath ſo ſmiled upon the Pious and Generous Endeavours of the Government, as to open a door for the ſpreading of the Goſpel in its Truth and Purity among the Aboriginal Natives of our Eaſtern Country ; it becomes us to give Thanks unto the Lord, who openeth the Gate of Righteouſneſs, that the People may go thereinto and Praiſe Him ; this Gate of the Lord, into which the Righteous enter : ——Bleſſed are they who ſo come in the Name of the Lord : and Bleſſed be God who giveth His Commandment on Earth, His Word runneth ſwiftly ; who has given His Son for a Covenant to the People, and a Light to lighten the Gentiles, to open the Blind Eyes, and be for Salvation to all the End of the Earth.

To proceed,

3. THE *Relation* which God ſtands in to us, as our Creator, our Sovereign, and our Judge, demands that we Bleſs His Name, by the moſt humble Submiſſion and Adoration.

FIRST, We owe this Duty to God as we are *His Creatures*, the Workmanſhip of His Hands, which He hath formed, and not we our ſelves. He made us for this very end and purpoſe, to get to Himſelf a Great Name: *This People have I*

formed for my ſelf to ſhew forth my praiſe: ſays God. Iſai. XLIII.21. And all the Creatures on Earth do and ſhall Praiſe Him, in their way and manner, according to their Nature and Capacities. 'Tis but juſt we give ſuitable acknowledgments to Man for any curious piece of Workmanſhip he is the Author of; and how much more ought we to Bleſs that God whoſe we are, and by whom *we are fearfully and wonderfully made*, Pſal. CXXXIX. 14. God will have Glory from us whether we will or no: Angels behold our Admirable contrivance, and Praiſe our Maker, as thoſe Morning Stars ſang together when the Foundations of the World were laid. But we are reaſonable Creatures; and God expects an active Homage from us; that we ourſelves give Glory to Him. And that not only by the Celebration of His Perfections appearing in our make, but in all the manifeſtations thereof in the courſe of His Providence towards us. That we remember we are His Creatures, who have our intire dependance upon Him; and accordingly pay the profoundeſt Submiſſion to Him, by a ſilent humble proſtrate Adoration before Him, in what form ſoever He ſees cauſe to mould and faſhion us. *O come let us worſhip, and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker: for He is our God, and we are the People of His Paſture, the Sheep of His Hands*, Pſal.XCV.6,7. *Go down to the Houſe of the Potter*; ſaith the Lord, —— the Veſſel *that He made of Clay was marred in His Hands*—*O Houſe of Iſrael cannot I do with you as the Potter ſaith the Lord; as the Clay is in the Potters hand, ſo are ye in my Hands*, Jer. XVIII.init. God not only formeth

eth our Clay, but He gave Eſſence to it alſo, and therefore our Obligation is the ſtronger to adore all the turns of His Hand.

SECONDLY, And this is part of that Natural Homage which we owe to God, as *our Sovereign* Lord and King, whoſe right it is to Rule. We owe it to our Sovereign, to Bleſs His Name all the ways we are capable of: to Praiſe Him who ſitteth upon the Circle of the Earth, and before whom the Inhabitants thereof are as Graſshoppers. *The Lord ſhall reign for ever, thy God, O Zion, unto all Generations; Praiſe ye the Lord,* Pſal. CXLVI. 10. *O clap your hands all ye People; —— God is gone up with a Shout, the Lord with the ſound of the Trumpet; ſing Praiſes to our God, ſing Praiſes; ſing Praiſes unto our King, ſing Praiſes: for God is the King of all the Earth; ſing ye Praiſes to Him with underſtanding,* Pſal. XLVII. 1, 5, 6, 7. Can any thing be more decent, than always to ſpeak honourably of our high Sovereign? It equally becomes us to ſpeak of the Glory of His Majeſty, and talk of His high Power; as to offer our humble Petitions to His Majeſty, for ſuch Mercies as we want: and 'tis as much a due Debt to our Sovereign, to Praiſe Him for the illuſtrious appearance of His Perfections in the Works of Providence, as to bow before Him with our humble Supplications.

AND we equally owe it to our Sovereign, to Bleſs His Name, by paying the profoundeſt Submiſſion to His Will. For God has an Original and underived Right to do what He pleaſes with us; and becauſe the rights of His Sovereignty

are independent and neceſſarily in Him, therefore they are truly unalienable & indefeaſible. Hence the Divine Sovereignty and Lordſhip challenges it at our Hand that we become all obedience and ſubmiſſion before Him; that under the moſt dark and myſterious, the moſt weighty and grievous allotments of Divine Rule and Government, we remember 'tis the Lord who has done it; who always does all things in Righteouſneſs and Wiſdom; whoſe Government muſt be acknowledged by us, by an intire reſignment of our ſelves and all our Intereſt to Him; ſaying before Him, *Here I am let the Lord do what ſeemeth Him Good*, 2 Sam. XV. 26. 'Tis as proper and neceſſary an Acknowledgment of our Dependance upon God, to ſubmit to His Hand, as to ask His Direction and Bleſſing; nature leads to them both alike; and alike they are Commanded; and thus we Bleſs God, with mournful Hearts; but humble ones; as truly as when we Sing His Praiſe with Joyful Lips. And here lyes the force of the Pſalmiſt's reaſoning; *The Lord hath prepared His Throne in the Heavens, His Kingdom ruleth over all; Bleſs the Lord ye His Angels, Bleſs the Lord ye His Hoſts, Bleſs the Lord all His Works, Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul*, ver. 19,——22. So muſt we give unto the Lord this Adoration and Submiſſion, as the Tribute due unto His Name: this is the Teſtimony of our Higheſt Eſteem, and our Deepeſt Veneration for our Sovereign; what the Infinite Diſtance between the moſt High God, and worms of the Duſt requires; and a proof of our attending our Duty around His Throne, thus to bow down and worſhip at His Footſtool.

FINALLY;

FINALLY; The Conſideration of our being accountable to God as *our Judge* beſpeaks it of us, to Bleſs the Name of the Lord. For here we are in a ſtate of Probation and Diſcipline; and the great deſign of all Gods dealings with us are anſwerable hereto; that by Mercies on the one hand, and Chaſtiſements on the other, we might have our minds enlarged in the knowlege of God, and all the Faculties and Powers conformed to this knowlege in a practical Service Obedience and Submiſſion to Him: and ſince we muſt at laſt be accountable to Him, how we have behaved our ſelves in this ſtate of Probation; what Improvement we have made of His Providences towards us; what returns of gratitude we have render'd Him for His many favours; what Impreſſions His Chaſtiſements have had upon us; what has been our Deportment under His Holy Hand; and how far a Life of Holineſs and the Temper of Obedient Subjects has been produced hereby; it concerns us as ever we would give up our Account to Him with Joy and not with Grief, that we thus Bleſs the Lord with our Souls and all that is within us.

BUT when we conſider God as thus related to us, according to the Tenor of the New Covenant in and thro' Chriſt Jeſus as the Head and Mediator thereof; that He is not only our Judge, but our Beſt Friend; not only our Lord and King, but our tender-hearted indulgent Father; Our God, peculiarly ſo, and as well our Bleſſed and Everlaſting Portion and Inheritance; what an abundant Ground is this; as for our Thanksgiving, ſo for the Joy of our Faith in Tribulation,

tion, and our patient ſubmiſſion to the Divine Hand, which always treats us under the Influence of this Covenant Relation. *Praiſe ye the Lord, Praiſe the Lord, O my Soul; while I live will I Praiſe the Lord, I will ſing Praiſes unto my God while I have any Being*; for *Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whoſe hope is in the Lord his God*, Pſal. CXLVI. 1, 2, 5.

SO I come to the Third and Laſt thing propoſed, viz.

III. TO ſet before you after what *manner* we are to Bleſs the Name of the Lord. And here,

1. WE muſt Bleſs the Lord *with our Souls*; That is to ſay, It muſt be a Sacrifice offered in Truth and Sincerity; otherwiſe it will prove offenſive like a corrupt thing, lame and heartleſs. 'Tis a Spiritual Service we are called to attend upon, and therefore our Spirits muſt be engaged in it. Merely to talk great things of the Majeſty, Power and Glory of God, and ſpeak of His Goodneſs and Bounty to us; or to hang down our Heads like a Bulruſh, and grown under the weight of His Hand, while our Souls are not duly impreſſed with a ſenſe of God in all, and filled with Praiſe or Adoration; all ſuch Calves of our Lips will prove but an unacceptable Sacrifice, and the Noiſe we make be an ungrateful ſound: but if our Souls give Praiſe, with an Elated Joy in the Lord, and Thankfulneſs to Him, or groan out the broken Accents of a deep Submiſſion and Humiliation; this is an agreeable Harmony in the Ears of the Lord, and the broken and contrite Spirit which He will not deſpiſe.

'Tis

'Tis not to Bleſs the Lord, if our Souls are not engaged herein; which indeed only are capable of ſo high a Duty, the Body being but the Inſtrument, as the Mouth the Organ, it uſes to Bleſs God with. So ſang the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. LVII. 7, 8. *My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed; I will Sing and give Praiſe; awake up my Glory, awake Pſaltery and Harp; I my ſelf will awake early.* When the Heart is awake, engaged in this Duty, and fixed with a ſteady Hope and Truſt in God, then ſhall we indeed Sing and give Praiſe, tho' it be a Night of Darkneſs with us. Our Souls muſt be inſpired by the Divine Spirit; there the Fire of Love and Zeal, Admiration and Reſignation muſt be enkindled, and burn with fervent Aſpirations to God, conſidered in His Eſſential Glories, His Communicative Goodneſs, and in all His relative Properties. While Grace Enlightens and Warms the Soul; and at the ſame time Humbles and Abaſes it, in a ſenſe of the Divine Excellency, and our own nothingneſs; then ſhall we be as high ſounding Cymbals, tuning forth Bleſſing, Honour, Glory and Power be unto the Lord our God.

2. WE muſt Bleſs the Lord with *all that is within us.* All our Faculties and Powers, all within our reach and diſpoſal ſhould be employed in this grateful Service.

EVERY Faculty of our Souls is to ſtrike up their pleaſant Notes: Our intellectual minds be raviſhed with the Luſtre and Brightneſs of the Divine Incomprehenſible Glories, the Majeſty and Sweetneſs of His Nature, the Extenſiveneſs of His Goodneſs, and the uncontroulableneſs of

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His Dominion: Our Wills chearfully harmonize with the Divine Will, by an intire Reſignation of our ſelves and our Intereſt thereto; highly approving it as the Bleſſed and only meaſure of our Happineſs, and the means leading to it; and readily obeying and ſubmitting to it with a genuine alacrity; our Affections raiſed and aſpiring, burning like Seraphs, with a Zeal for the Glory of God, intirely centring, and ſweetly delighting in Him; and void of all boiſterous fretfulneſs, or ſullen murmurs, with a ſedate Truſt, and a gentle Hope patiently bear the Indignation of the Lord, and quietly wait for His Salvation.

AND while we Behold the Inviſible things of God, clearly manifeſt by the Viſible things of the Creation; while we hear of the Glory of His Kingdom, & the Might of His terrible Acts; while we taſte that the Lord is Good and Gracious; or feel the weight of His Hand; our Souls ſhould make uſe of our Bodily Powers, as Inſtruments, in celebrating the Praiſes, and adoring the Majeſty of our God. Thus no part of Man ſhould be dumb and ſilent, ſtupid and unactive; but with all that is within us ſhould we Bleſs the Name of the Lord.

SO ſhould we Bleſs God with all that is within our reach and power; offering to Him not only the Sacrifice of our Bodies and Spirits, as a living Service; but Sacrificing all our Intereſts and Enjoyments to the Lord, as one whole Burnt-Offering, and a reaſonable Service; honouring the Lord with our Subſtance, abounding in Works of Piety & Charity; and reſigning up our moſt valuable Friends and Relations, whenſoever He ſees meet to call for them. 3. TO

3. TO add no more; There muſt be a Spirit of *Holineſs*, Devotion, and Religion in all our Attempts to Bleſs the Name of the Lord: elſe we ſhall but Bleſs our ſelves in our Hearts, and Flatter our ſelves in our own Eyes, and cry Peace, Peace, when there is none. 'Tis the Holy Name of God we are to Bleſs; and ſurely then it muſt be performed in a Holy and Religious manner. Vain minds may think it enough to Bleſs God, by rejoycing with a carnal mirth and jollity over their Good Chear, without a devout thought of the God that beſtows it upon them; or pleaſe themſelves with their noiſy Sports, as tho' Revelling were a Sacrifice fit for a God; or ſay in a frothy vein God be thanked, and Bleſſed be God, it is ſo and ſo with me. But we have not ſo learned the Nature of God and His Worſhip, as to prophane His Name, and think it a ſuitable way of Bleſſing Him. His Name is Holy, ſo that the Object of Praiſe, Thanksgiving and Adoration is Holy; and ſo ſhould the Subjects be too, Holy Hearts; and it muſt be performed in a Devout and Religious manner; otherwiſe there will be no proportion between the Nature of that God we pretend to Bleſs, and the nature of the Offering we preſent to Him. 'Tis from religious Principles, that we are to Celebrate the Perfections of the Deity; from a religious ſenſe of the Divine Bounty and Goodneſs, that we return our humble and hearty Thanksgiving to Him; and from a religious awe and reverence, that we are to Adore before Him. So the Holy Angels Bleſs God, ſaying, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hoſts, the whole Earth is full of thy Glory,*

Iſai. VI. 3. And in like Holy manner ſhould the Saints on Earth Eccho back, *Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty*; —— *thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power, for thou haſt created all things; and for thy pleaſure they are and were created*, Rev. IV. 8, 11. Thus God ſhould be ſeen, acknowledged, and adored in all that we have, and in all that befalls us; and while this Duty is thus carefully attended by us, then do we Bleſs the Lord with our Souls, and all that is within us, Bleſs His Holy Name.

¶ THUS I have endeavoured to ſet before you the preſent Duty of this Day; and reconcile your deep Humiliation, with the Publick Joyful Thanksgiving which you are called to attend. And if in my Attempts to lead you in the Songs of Zion, you eaſily perceive my imperfect Speech, and faultring Accents; you will as readily conceive, my Harp, with yours, as hanging upon the Willows.

SURE I am, when I meditate the Sudden Departure of my Reverend and Beloved Brother, Mr. GEORGE CURWIN, I cannot but be ſenſibly affected with it, as an awful and great frown of Providence in depriving me of thoſe advantages I propoſed to my ſelf, from his Friendſhip as a Brother, and his wiſe Counſel as a Father: and I doubt not but a ſenſe of your Loſs of ſo valuable Bleſſing, as you have enjoyed in him, ſits heavy upon you in this Day of your Joyful Solemnities.

YOU all know, that tho' the pleaſure of Hea-

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ven ſpared him but a few Years in his Relation to you, yet he grew Old in your Service, wearing himſelf out with hard and conſtant Labour among you.

HE ſeemed to have been peculiarly formed from his Youth, for the great and noble Deſign, he afterwards ſpent a ſhort and Laborious Life in.

THE Spirit of Early Devotion, accompanied with a natural freedom of Thought, and eaſy Elocution, a quick Invention, a ſolid Judgment, and a tenacious Memory, laid the Foundations of a Good Preacher; to which his Acquired Literature, his great Reading, hard Studies, deep Meditation, and cloſe Walk with God, rendred him an Able, and a Faithful Miniſter of the New-Teſtament.

AND, for the Three Years and an Half that he bore the Relation of your Paſtor, you know, and are Witneſſes, how Holy, and Unblameably he hath walked before you; how fervent, and zealous his Addreſſes have been to you; how ſincerely, and with what Agony of Soul, he has been wooing you unto an Eſpouſal with the Son of God.

YOU know how Faithful he has been in diſpencing his Admonitions, Reproofs, Rebukes, and Exhortations, equally to the High, and the Low, without reſpect to Perſons; and as faithful in his true concern and tender regards, in his unwearied Care and Labours, for the Salvation of the Immortal Souls of the Pooreſt, as well as the Richeſt of his Flock.

NOR are you Ignorant of his Charities, which were equal to his Patrimony, and his enlarged Mind, which contemned Earthly things; tho' they have been ſo prudently diſpenced as to be beſt known unto thoſe who ſat under his Shadow, rejoycing in his fruit; and now mourn him as their common Parent and Benefactor.

HIS great Humanity, added to thoſe other Embelliſhments of Nature and of Grace, rendred him Pleaſant and agreeable to all Men; but the Delight of them that knew him: and peculiarly ſo to my Venerable Aged Father, (the Reverend Mr. NICHOLAS NOYES, †) who rejoyced in this his *Colleague*, as in a *Son* Begotten in the Lord; and had the pleaſing proſpect of leaving his Charge in the hands of ſo Skilful and Faithful a Succeſſor: but now mourns with you his Loſs, and is ready to ſay, O my Son, my Son; would God, I had dyed for thee; my Son, my Son.

AND, as one would expect of ſuch a Perfect and Upright Man, he Dyed in Peace; unleſs in the Deliriums of his Diſtemper; in the midſt of which, and I think in one of the laſt Fits of it, he ſtill manifeſted the intenſeneſs of his mind upon his Maſters Work, and his great Concern for you, imagining himſelf to have been in the Pulpit, and ſo in a manner Dyed Preaching; and is gone to keep a better Thanksgiving than he could have done on Earth.

† Whom the awful Providence of God removed to a better World, *Decemb.* 13*th* following, having juſt finiſhed the 79*th* Year of his Age.

THERE

THERE is ſomething in the Time of his Death, beſides its being in the midſt of his Days, peculiarly Afflicting; viz. that it takes you under the Diſadvantage of your Aged Paſtors very great Bodily Pains and Weakneſſes, and when a Number of you are propoſing to ſwarm your ſelves into an other ſeparate Congregation.

BRETHREN; Let this awful Rebuke of Providence upon you, in removing ſo bright and ſhining a Light from among you, and at ſuch a Time as this, be duly reſented by a deep Humiliation before the Lord, from a humbling ſenſe of His Holy Hand lying heavy upon you herein.

SERIOUSLY conſider how far your own unprofitableneſs, while you walked in his Light, may have provoked God to ſhut you up in ſo much Darkneſs, by entinguiſhing ſo great a Luminary.

AND now joyn with united Hearts & Hands, however you may have your ſeparate Places for Publick Worſhip, in helping forward the Great Work, which his Heart was ſo much ſet upon, of Building up the Kingdom of God among you.

LET Your Aged Paſtor, now the Works falls the heavier upon him, with the Additional weight of his own Pains and Sorrows have the greater ſhare in your intire Affections, and your dutiful Veneration, and Submiſſion to his Counſels and Exhortations; that the few remainders of his weary Pilgrimage may be rendred Comfortable to him, in ſeeing the more of his Children walk in the Truth, and becoming a Crown of Rejoycing to him.

CALL

CALL to mind the many wholſome Inſtructions your Deceaſed Paſtor, who Dead yet ſpeaketh, hath given you, and the Holy Example he hath ſet you; and ſo Live, and ſo Do.

PRAISE God who furniſhed him with ſuch Bright Characters of His own Image; Give thanks to God that you have enjoyed ſo rich a Gift from Our Aſcended Saviour; and now that he is taken away from you, ſilently and humbly Adore the Divine Government and Dominion; ſeek and rely upon His Fatherly Pity and Compaſſion to furniſh and beſtow upon you ſuch an other Perfect Gift from Above.

LET not your heavy Loſs interrupt your ſenſe of the many Bleſſings you enjoy, and ſuch as this Day calls for your thankful Acknowlegments, particularly in the ſpared Life of your Aged Paſtor; and earneſtly Beg of God to Continue and Strengthen him, that he may flouriſh in the Houſe of his God.

THIS will be to Glorify God in the Fire, and to Bleſs the Name of the Lord, when He takes away, as well as when He gives.

AND now, what Supports have the Aged and Honourable and Bereaved Parents from the Conſideration, that This their Son, Born from Above, after a Labourious Endeavour to aſſiſt them, and an unfainting Struggle to help others in their Journey to the Better World, has but juſt got the ſtart of them, and reached his Native Home before them; where within a very little while, they will meet again, never more to be parted; and joyn in Conſort with him in Songs of Praiſe

Gratitude

Gratitude and Adoration, without the Burden of their mournful Weeds, or ſo much as a whiſpered Sigh to break in upon the Harmony.

MAY the Vertuous Relict and tender Offſpring inherit a plentiful return from the vaſt Stock of Prayers, which have been laid out for them, and have a double Portion of his Spirit reſting upon them; may She find her Maker to be her Husband, and God to be their Father; and in the midſt of their Sorrows be enabled to rejoyce in the Lord, and joy in the God of their Salvation.

SHOULD an Angel from Heaven audibly declare the Happy State their Deceaſed Son and Husband is entred into the poſſeſſion of, it would not be ſuch ground of Comfort as the review of his paſt Life ſpent in ſo near a Conformity to the Rules of the Goſpel. And becauſe God, who is the God of Abraham, of Iſaac, and of Jacob, is the God of the Living, and not of the Dead, they may be aſſured that ſince Chriſt his Head Lives, he Lives alſo, and his Sleeping Duſt ſhall partake of a Glorious Reſurrection. *Awake and Sing, ye that dwell in the Duſt; thy Dead Men ſhall live, together with my dead Body ſhall they ariſe,* Iſai. XXVI. 19. Wherefore Comfort one another with theſe Words.

TO Conclude, may we all be lead to follow his Example, wherein he followed Chriſt; that our whole Life may be one continued Strain of Bleſſing the Holy Name of the Lord, under the various Changes which paſs over us in a vale of Te-

on Earth, we
our present Pilgrimage, and
of the Lord arrive safe to the
with Songs and Everlasting Joy
Heads, where we shall obtain Gladness,
and Sorrow and Sighing shall flee away; where
no Broken String in our Harp, nor Jarring
Note in our Songs, shall spoil the Melody of our
Endless and Unwearied Praise, Thanksgiving
and Adoration.

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